**COVID-19 health key messages**

3 November 2021

**Approved messages from the Ministry of Health for use in your communications**

Consistent messaging helps us to coordinate our efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

 **New Zealand Alert Level status**

Upper Northland is at Alert Level 3. Auckland is at Alert Level 3 Step 1. Parts of Waikato are at Alert Level 3 Step 2.

The rest of New Zealand is at Alert Level 2.

These settings will be reviewed on Monday 8 November 2021.

Find out what you need to do at different Alert Levels on the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/current-alert-level/)

**COVID-19 vaccination figures update**

Yesterday, **28,921** vaccines were administered. Of those, **7,574** were first doses and **21,347** were second doses administered. To date, **3,201,226** people (**76%** of the eligible population)are fully vaccinated.

[COVID-19 vaccine data and statistics – Ministry of Health website](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-data-and-statistics/covid-19-vaccine-data)

**Community cases update**There are **100** new cases of COVID-19 in the community today. Of these new cases, **97** are in Auckland and **3** are in Waikato.

There are locations of interest in a range of regions in the North Island and around Blenheim and Christchurch in the South Island.

[Locations of interest – Ministry of Health website](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest)

[Section 70 public health orders – Ministry of Health website](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-response-planning/covid-19-epidemic-notice-and-orders#section70)

**Testing figures update**

Yesterday, **29,521** tests were processed across New Zealand.

**New Pfizer agreement for 4.7 million doses**

The Government has signed a purchase agreement for 4.7 million additional doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

This agreement will provide a continual supply of the Pfizer vaccine next year for those who did not access a vaccine in 2021. These doses will complement our portfolio of vaccines scheduled for delivery throughout 2022.

It will also provide vaccines if the eligibility is extended to include children aged 5- to 11-year-olds, and for a potential booster programme, if evidence determines this is required.

These doses will also support ongoing immunisation efforts in the Pacific and Fiji.

View the media release: [Additional Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines purchased](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/additional-pfizer-covid-19-vaccines-purchased)

**COVID-19 medicines for use in New Zealand**

New Zealand has secured access to a new medicine for treating COVID-19. The medicine Ronapreve will join the range of medical tools at our disposal for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19.

Ronapreve belongs to a class of medicines called monoclonal antibodies which mimic the natural antibodies made by the immune system to fight disease.

Pharmac announced last month it has reached an agreement to buy stocks of the antiviral medicine molnupiravir which can be used to treat people with mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms.

Both ronapreve and molnupiravir are currently being assessed by Medsafe.

View the media release: [Pharmac negotiates deal for a further COVID-19 treatment](https://pharmac.govt.nz/news-and-resources/news/2021-10-31-pharmac-negotiates-deal-for-a-further-covid-19-treatment/)

**Keeping calm and safe with people upset at having to be vaccinated**

The Government’s vaccine mandate for workers in the health and education sectors has meant that health workers are likely to experience colleagues and members of public venting their frustrations and anger about having to get vaccinated.

With this in mind, we have developed resources to help people feel confident and calm when faced with high emotion and have created some tips on how to talk to people about the vaccination order.

View [mandatory vaccination resources for health professionals](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/covid-19-vaccine-information-health-professionals#mandatory)

**Follow up to ‘Super Saturday’**
It is now three weeks since Super Saturday so people who received their first vaccination that weekend are encouraged to get their second dose this Saturday – or as soon as possible after that.

Those who had their first dose on Super Saturday will be getting email and text reminders to go and get their second shot.

This is being supported in Auckland at Eden Park this weekend with the #GotYaDot event – a unifying campaign to help whanau, hapû, iwi, teams, communities, and families to get a dot (vaccine) and protect their whakapapa.

<https://gotyadot.co.nz/>

**COVID-19 Health key messages 1 November 2021**

**Health and disability workers to get priority access to 300 MIQ places**

The Ministry of Health is to work with DHBs and PHOs to allocate priority access to MIQ places for critical health and disability workers who are overseas and want to work in New Zealand.

The process for receiving applications begins today, 1 November 2021, with the first MIQ rooms allocated from 22 November. Up to 300 places a month will be reserved for workers in this category.

Health and disability workers who are not citizens or permanent residents will need proof of a job in New Zealand and must meet immigration requirements. Applicants need to meet certain eligibility criteria for one of these MIQ places.

Eligibility criteria and information on how to apply can be found on the Ministry of Health website: [Dedicated MIQ places for critical health and disability workers | Ministry of Health NZ](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-health-professionals/dedicated-miq-places-critical-health-and-disability-workers)

[Read the media release on Beehive.govt.nz](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/guaranteed-miq-spots-health-workers)

**COVID-19 Health key messages 29 October 2021**

**Updated testing requirements for education and MIQF workers**

In response to the elevated threat of the transmission of the Delta variant of COVID-19 there have been several changes to the Required Testing Order (RTO) recently around vaccination and testing requirements in the education and healthcare sectors, prisons and managed isolation and quarantine facilities (MIQFs).

We acknowledge the vital role that you play in this response and thank you for your continued work to protect the people of Aotearoa /New Zealand from COVID-19.

**Education sector**The change to the testing order includes early childhood services as well as registered schools, including State schools, State integrated schools and all private schools.

**At Alert Level 3**, there are two types of testing required for COVID-19:

* **Return to school test**

Teachers and support staff must receive a negative COVID-19 test result no more than 72 hours prior to returning to school.  This can be either a nasal swab (nasopharyngeal) or throat swab (oropharyngeal with bilateral anterior nares).

* **Surveillance testing for workers who are unvaccinated or partly vaccinated**

From 15 November, teachers and support staff will need to undergo weekly surveillance testing until they are fully vaccinated. The deadline for being fully vaccinated is 1 January 2022.

This testing can be:

* a nasal or throat swab once a week, via GPs or community testing centres
* a saliva test 2 times a week, with at least 2 days between tests, utilising Asia Pacific Healthcare Group (APHG), the laboratory which currently provide saliva testing services for the Ministry

**MIQF workers**
From 11.59 pm 8 November testing frequency for MIQF workers will be changing.  For workers who are onsite twice a week or more:

* At quarantine facilities, they will have to be tested every day they work at the facility.
* At managed isolation facilities, they will have to be tested twice a week.
* For dual-use facilities, they will be on a quarantine facility schedule if they have a case in the facility and they will be on a managed isolation facility schedule if they do not have a case.

These workers can choose either saliva or swab testing to meet this testing requirement.

If workers work onsite less than twice a week (both quarantine and isolation facilities), they will be required to do:

* *Either* 1 swab test (nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal) within 7 days of working at the facility;
* *Or* 2 saliva tests within 7 days of working at the facility, with the tests being a minimum of two days apart.

**Upcoming changes for returnees in MIFs**

On 28 October, the Government announced its decision to reduce the time spent in managed isolation facilities (MIFs) for international returnees from 14 days to 7 days, followed by 3 days self-isolation, with release subject to a negative day 9 test result from a test taken in the community. This change will come into effect on 14 November 2021.

Current tests at day 0/1, day 3 and day 6/7 will remain in the testing regime. Operational details for inclusion of a rapid antigen test point of departure test and Day 9 test are currently being worked through and we will advise further details when confirmed.

This follows developments in our knowledge of COVID-19 transmission, infectious periods, and testing approaches, particularly around the Delta variant, meaning that the length of time that people are required to be in managed isolation can be decreased with minimal additional risk to the community.

**New vaccination requirements to enter New Zealand**

From 1 November 2021, all non-New Zealand citizen travellers who arrive in New Zealand by the air border will need to be fully vaccinated. They will need to have completed a full course of one of the [approved vaccinations](https://covid19.trackvaccines.org/vaccines/approved/#vaccine-list) at least 14 days before they depart for New Zealand.

[COVID-19: Vaccination exemptions for non-NZ citizens travelling to NZ - Ministry of Health website](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-advice-travellers/covid-19-vaccination-exemptions-non-new-zealand-citizens-travelling-new-zealand)

**Medsafe renews provisional approval for Pfizer vaccine**

Medsafe has renewed the provisional approval for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to be used in New Zealand.

The renewal of provisional approval is for a period of two years, until 3 November 2023.

Medsafe will continue to assess any supporting information against the appropriate standards as additional quality, safety and efficacy data is received and reviewed. During the next two-year renewal period, Medsafe may grant full approval at any time, once Pfizer has submitted a relevant application and information.

[Medsafe renews COVID-19 vaccine provisional approval - Ministry of Health](https://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/news-items/medsafe-renews-covid-19-vaccine-provisional-approval)